

Annex C

EMERGENCY RELIEF AND RE-ENTRY

I. MISSION

To quickly evaluate and assess the immediate human needs (*food, water, health/medical, and housing*) and the operational status of vital community infrastructure (*transportation, communications, and utility systems*), and then, to assist impacted localities restore their essential services as soon as possible and to assist with planning for the safe and appropriate return of evacuees to their homes and businesses.

II. ORGANIZATION

Each locality is responsible for conducting its own immediate needs assessment. This assessment will determine if the locality is safe to permit reentry of residents, property/business owners. However, state and federal assistance is also available to assist or, if necessary, to conduct such an assessment. State participation will be coordinated by Virginia Department of Emergency Management (*VDEM*) and federal participation by Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (*DHS/FEMA*).

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. Return to the Risk Area

- 1) Immediately following a major disaster or emergency, impacted localities will conduct a Rapid Needs Assessment (*RNA*) to determine immediate needs, imminent hazards, as well as the overall impact of the event and report this information to the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (*VEOC*) to support the development and deployment of critical resources to support the health and life safety needs identified as well as other emergency response activities.
- 2) Any areas identified in the RNA process as unsafe or hazardous will be clearly marked and restricted until such time as the hazard has been neutralized.
- 3) The decision, timing and interval of when to permit residents and property/business owners to return to the risk area, post landfall, will be made cooperatively between the VEOC and locality(*ies*) of the impacted areas.
- 4) Once life-safety issues are addressed, the locality is responsible for conducting an Initial Damage Assessment (*IDA*) which provides the first description of the type and scope of damages and associated impacts sustained by the community as a result of the event. The IDA should be submitted to the VEOC within 72 hours of the event. It is critical that the information provided in the IDA accurately reflects the damage and impact sustained by the community, as the decision to request a Preliminary Damage Assessment (*PDA*) necessary to seek a presidential disaster declaration is made based on this information.

Concept of Operations – Continued

- 5) The decision to allow reentry will be based on an overall evaluation of the situation, including the following major factors:
 - i) Access - Following a major event, an aerial survey of the impacted area(s) should be conducted immediately to identify and prioritize the most seriously damaged areas of the locality(ies) and associated access issues. This can determine the level of damage to major routes into the area and help to determine the time for debris clearance from those routes.
 - ii) Water levels - Have floodwaters receded from most of the area?
 - iii) Public Health - Are water and sewer services operating properly?
 - iv) Subsistence - Is food available or can it be made available in the impacted area?
 - v) Utilities - Are electricity, telephone, and natural gas services operating or when can they be made available in the risk area?
 - vi) Can existing services support the people already in the impacted area as well as an additional influx of people?
- 6) Once the decision to permit reentry has been established, law enforcement personnel should set up checkpoints and roadblocks as needed based upon the level of damage that has occurred. Reentry can proceed as recommended based upon a Phased approach. Phased Reentry can limit primary access to essential personnel and help to manage the number of people entering the disaster area.
 - i) **Phase I** – Phase I allows the reentry of agencies and groups that play key roles in restoring normal operations in the impacted area following a disaster. Law enforcement personnel should restrict access during this phase to provide for area safety and security. Phase I agencies and groups may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Search and Rescue Resources
 - Infrastructure and Utilities Repair Personnel
 - Official Damage Assessment Teams
 - Other personnel at the direction of the local Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

Concept of Operations – Continued

- ii) **Phase II** – Phase II allows for the limited reentry of other critical groups as well as residents and business owners. The local Emergency Operations Center (*EOC*) in coordination with public safety personnel should determine when it is safe to begin Phase II entry. Phase II groups may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Relief Workers
 - Health Agencies
 - Insurance Agents
 - Residents and Business Owners/Operators
- 7) If the impacted area(s) cannot support the return of evacuated residents, interim and long-term housing strategies will be developed in coordination with federal, state and private sector and Non-Governmental Organization (*NGO*) partners to address housing needs identified.
- 8) In the event of a major disaster declaration, a Joint Field Office (*JFO*) will be established in or near the affected area to support disaster response and recovery operations.

B. Checkpoints

- 1) Local law enforcement officers are primarily responsible for establishing and staffing checkpoints for reentry into their locality. A tiered re-entry protocol will be developed that applies to all local, state, federal, private sector and NGO personnel identified and mobilized to support re-entry, response and recovery operations.
- 2) In order to expedite the reentry process, an Identification Verification Area (*IVA*) should be established close to each checkpoint for people with questionable identification. Every effort should be made to ensure that residents return to their homes as soon as safely possible. Law enforcement will limit the flow of returning traffic to better manage the checkpoints.

C. Identification Procedures

- 1) Identification procedures are intended to provide guidance for law enforcement personnel who may be directing access to disaster-impacted localities.
- 2) Residents, relief workers and business owners should have proper identification, such as a driver's license or company identification (*ID*) card, to enter an impacted area. Other documents to consider that establish right-of-entry into a disaster impact area may be; utility bills, property tax receipts, car registration, and other legal documents presenting an address for verification.

Concept of Operations – Continued

D. Roadblocks

- 1) The strategic location of roadblocks is an important part of the reentry process. Roadblocks can be utilized to seal entry points into devastated areas for two main reasons:
 - ii) Roadblocks can be used to prevent mass entry of the civilian population, which can clog rescue routes for people in the impacted areas who may require medical attention.
 - iii) Roadblocks are a method to help curtail acts of unlawfulness such as looting.

E. Curfews

Localities may initiate curfews as a crime prevention measure depending on the intensity of the disaster and the level of damage sustained. The decision to implement a curfew and the duration of such rests with the local governing body.

IV. EMERGENCY RELIEF & RE-ENTRY *PRE-EVENT* ACTION CHECKLIST

Readiness Condition 5 – Routine Operations

- 1) Prepare the necessary plans, SOPs and resources in coordination with local, state, federal, private sector and non-governmental organization partners to ensure a safe, effective and timely re-entry process into disaster impacted areas that may be local or regional in character to include:
 - Identification of critical routes and facilities in coordination with utility departments/companies, transportation agencies and other response and recovery support agencies and organizations.
 - Prioritize road clearance activities following an event to support and expedite response and recovery operations.
 - Develop plans to protect key personnel and essential resources (*equipment, supplies etc.*) to ensure the capability to initiate re-entry, response and recovery operations in a timely manner.
 - Development of a contact list of all critical public, private sector, and NGO personnel anticipated to support response and recovery operations.
 - Development of contracts (*debris removal, towing etc.*) and Memorandums of Understanding (*MOU's*) to enhance local capabilities to implement re-entry plans and support emergency relief activities following disaster events.
 - Development of a tiered re-entry protocol that applies to all local, state, federal, private sector and NGO personnel identified and mobilized to support re-entry, response and recovery operations.
- 2) Review responsibilities and authorities with legal counsel and ensure existing laws/ordinances provide the capability to implement the necessary actions to ensure the health, safety and welfare of citizens while addressing critical issues in support of recovery process (*e.g., protective measures, access restrictions, reentry policies, curfews, price controls, public nuisance and other emergency rules of operation etc.*)
- 3) Identify staff to support rapid needs and damage assessment teams, and provide the appropriate training to prepare teams to accomplish tasks in an effective and timely manner.
- 4) Develop the necessary forms, procedures, and plans to support damage assessment process, and identify the necessary resources teams will need to perform work.
- 5) Review existing financial system policies, procedures and supporting infrastructure to ensure framework is structured to effectively capture and track disaster costs being generated by all departments as soon as re-entry, response and recovery activities are initiated (*e.g., personnel, equipment, supplies, contract services, travel etc.*), and facilitate the sorting, retrieving and packaging of this information and associated documentation for cost reimbursement purposes.

Pre-Event Action Checklist Readiness Condition 5 - Continued

- 6) Request all departments review staffing requirements and develop plan to fulfill anticipated needs (*e.g., other departments, Mutual aid, statewide mutual aid, volunteers, local hires, contract services*).
- 7) Develop/provide the necessary pre-event as well as “Just-In-Time” training to ensure the effective and timely implementation of disaster response and recovery plans.
- 8) Review/revise overtime and compensatory time policies to support recovery operations.
- 9) Develop pre-scripted announcements to support recovery process.
- 10) Review current resource inventories and contracts in place in context of anticipated department needs, and develop resource management plan that defines strategy to fulfill disaster recovery resource needs (*e.g., establish additional contracts; mutual aid; Statewide Mutual Aid; donations etc.*).

NOTE: Readiness Conditions 4 through 1 do not apply to this section

V. EMERGENCY RELIEF & RE-ENTRY *POST-EVENT* ACTION CHECKLIST

Emergency Relief Phase – Life Saving Operations & Restoration of Essential Services

- 1) Execute plans and SOPs developed in context of consequences and associated impacts of disaster event.
- 2) Implement and enforce the tiered re-entry protocol applicable to all local, state, federal, private sector and NGO personnel identified and mobilized to support re-entry, response and recovery operations.
- 3) Maintain access controls and security established following evacuation until Rapid Needs Assessment is conducted and all significant health, safety, and environmental hazards are identified and addressed.
- 4) Brief first responders, emergency relief personnel, critical infrastructure owners/operators, key business representatives, contractors and the general public that may have remained in place during the event or may be attempting to return to the area, on the health, safety and environmental hazards identified and provide the necessary guidance to prevent or minimize exposure to these hazards when in the disaster area.
- 5) The appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (*PPE*) should be provided to all first responders based on the guidance developed. Private sector organizations will be responsible for ensuring their representatives and associated contractors have the appropriate PPE while working in the disaster area.
- 6) Local officials in coordination with their state, regional, federal and private sector partners will determine when it is safe to allow residents access to the impacted area, and develop a plan identifying the preferred routes, defining any associated time restrictions etc.
- 7) The re-entry plan developed will be disseminated to the public through the Joint Information Center and posted on the appropriate local, state and federal government websites.
- 8) Depending on the scope and magnitude of the event, transportation resources may have to be provided to assist residents in returning to the area to assess damages and recover any personal belongings, as well as ascertain when they may be able to return based on utility restoration operations, lingering health and safety issues, insurance settlements, etc.
- 9) Develop/implement plan to facilitate permit/code compliance during recovery period.
- 10) Continually assess needs, monitor progress and develop plan to transition back to normal operations at the appropriate time, in coordination with state, federal, private sector and NGO partners.
- 11) Conduct an After-Action Review (*AAR*) of Response and Recovery Operations and develop plan to enhance operations and address shortfalls.